UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/151
23 February 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

LETTER DATED 20 FEBRUARY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I hereby have the honour to transmit the text of the joint Russian-Chinese statement on Iraq adopted at the conclusion of the meeting in Moscow on 17 February 1998 between the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. B. N. Yeltsin, and the Prime Minister of China, Mr. Li Peng (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) S. LAVROV

Annex

Joint statement

The President of the Russian Federation, Mr. B. N. Yeltsin, and the Prime Minister of China, Mr. Li Peng, discussed in detail the situation that is developing with respect to Iraq. Both sides expressed deep concern at the dangerous turn taken by events.

The Russian Federation and China, as permanent members of the Security Council, do not accept a solution involving the use of force, and advocate a political settlement of the crisis which would ensure that Iraq fully implements the relevant resolutions of the Council, guarantee the elimination of Iraq's potential for weapons of mass destruction and open the way to the lifting of the sanctions on Iraq, above all the oil embargo.

In the context of the active efforts currently being undertaken to find such a solution, particular importance attaches to the mission of the Secretary-General to Baghdad, which deserves the full support of the international community.